

ABSTRACT

A network monitoring agent is disclosed that monitors network conditions, such as traffic volume, and determines when to dynamically adjust the encoding scheme for one or more connections. The network monitoring agent can select an encoding standard based on, for example, current network traffic volume, network error characteristics, time of day or day of week. In the illustrative network traffic implementation, an encoding standard that provides a lower degree of compression and a higher quality level is selected at times of lighter network traffic. Likewise, as network traffic increases, an encoding standard that provides a higher degree of compression, although at a lower quality level, is selected in order to maximize the network utilization. The network monitoring agent notifies one or both of the devices associated with each connection of changes in the encoding scheme. Generally, both devices must change the compression algorithm at the same time, to ensure proper decoding of received packets. The initiating device inserts a notification in a field of a predefined number of packet headers to inform the recipient device that subsequent packets will be encoded with a different specified encoding algorithm, until further notice. Thereafter, the recipient device can load the appropriate codec to properly decompress and decode the received packets.

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